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20 August 1951

TO: Chief, FDP

FROM: Deputy Chief, FDP

SUBJECT: Meeting with Ex-King Zog

1. On 15 August 1951 [] and I went to the Mayflower Hotel and were met by Zog's aide, Colonel Selmani, who took us into Zog's suite. Zog was very cordial but not effusive in a meeting which lasted for nearly an hour and a half and at which only he, [] and I were present.

2. Zog spoke fairly good French (which I have since learned from [] he must have acquired only in latter years). He asked me if I spoke German, in which he apparently feels more at home.

3. Zog began by saying that he was here only for a few days, having come for the purpose of putting his twelve-year-old son in a prep school somewhere in the general area of Washington and New York. After he had accomplished this he had intended to return to Alexandria, where he would be available in case we wished to avail ourselves of his services. He mentioned that Queen Geraldine was now visiting in the Levant and I asked if she had been to Baalbek. Zog then described his boyhood in Istanbul and trips which he had taken himself in the Levant, seeing numerous historical ruins of interest.

4. After this social conversation and after [] had ~~expressed~~ ^{stated} (at the beginning) that [] sent his compliments and regretted that he was unable to see Zog, the latter said there were four things about the Albanian situation which he considered to be very important and which he requested be transmitted to []. He said that the seven pre-war airfields in Albania were being developed and two new airfields built and commented that this activity could hardly be aimed at Yugoslavia but was probably aimed at the Western positions in the area, especially our air base in Tripoli, but also be used against the Middle East. He felt that a force of 100,000 men in Albania (50,000 in the Albanian armed forces; the remaining 50,000, presumably Soviet or Satellite troops which might be brought in) would constitute a dangerous threat to Yugoslavia. His third and fourth points appeared to be very closely related and were concerned with the Bay of Valona and Soviet submarines, of which he thought the Bay could accommodate

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90 to 100. He also mentioned the importance of the Island of Saseno.

5. Given the importance of these ^{facts} ~~plans~~, Zog proposed three possible solutions:

a. An armed invasion of Albania by American troops (which he supposed the Russians would consider provocation);

b. An internal revolution (which could not successfully be done without the cooperation of the Army);

c. An invasion from Greece of an army of 8,000 to 10,000 Albanian exiles led by Zog ^{which} ~~would~~ not be accomplished without becoming known to the outside world ~~and~~ in conjunction with an internal uprising. §

6. With regard to intelligence, Zog admitted that he had no organization inside the country and said merely that he occasionally had opportunity to send one of his followers into Albania to make contact with one or more persons there whom he considered to be loyal to him. The persons he is able to send in are low-level individuals, "not officers or engineers." The persons to whom they go are largely former members of the Officer Reserve Corps, which Zog developed during his reign from 1924 to 1939, and who numbered 2,800 before the war; of this number, according to Zog's information, some 700 have been liquidated by the present regime, others may have died, and still others may have defected. However, Zog believes that there are still approximately 2,000 former reserve officers inside Albania upon whose loyalty he can count.

7. Judging by certain observations which Zog made on the situation in Albania, it appeared to me that he was not at all ~~very~~ well informed on what is really going on. Nevertheless, there is the possibility that we could exploit Zog along the following lines:

a. Upon his return to Alexandria make contact with him and request that he provide us such information on conditions in Albania as he ^{can} ~~is able to do~~ on the basis of (a) reports received from the occasional couriers which he sends into the country, ~~and~~ ^(b) correspondents which occasionally reaches him indirectly, and ~~and~~ ^(c) occasional interrogations of refugees from Albania;

b. Subsequently ask him to advise us when he is planning to send someone into the country and to inform us of the area into which he will be going so that we might supply questionnaires;

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c. Eventually ascertain the identity and location of various of the reserve officers whom Zog considers definitely loyal, particularly well qualified and competent, and least under suspicion by the Communist authorities, for the purpose of using them as principal agents and providing safe houses for W/T operators and couriers.

8. In connection with the above, Zog mentioned that he had great difficulty in sending anyone into Albania because the Greeks did not accept their documents (presumably royal Albanian passports) and consequently he had to send them to Turkey, where they were able to obtain Greek visas and enter Greece for overland infiltration into Albania. (If we were so minded, it should be an easy matter for us to facilitate Zog in sending his couriers into Albania through Greece without their having to go by way of Turkey.)

9. In connection with the Albanian Committee in Yugoslavia Zog observed that, although it was composed of unknowns, it nevertheless was a more powerful body than the Committee for Free Albania because it was set up by the Yugoslav Government and had at its disposal several thousand Albanians in an area contiguous to Albania. At the same time he emphasized that he was doing every possible thing to assure harmony in the Committee for Free Albania. As regards the institutional question he emphasized that the decision should be left to the Albanian people and that he himself would insist upon a plebiscite before he would return to Albania.

10. Throughout, Zog's manner was frank and he appeared to be very sincere, his professions carrying conviction even though it is recognized that it is very difficult if not impossible for a former monarch to divorce himself entirely from visions of returning to his kingdom.

11. Beyond obtaining the above information, only a small part of which was elicited as a result of direct questions, I said nothing to indicate any intelligence interest on our part along operational lines. () was to see Zog again, this time alone, on 16 August, for the purpose of further exploring Zog's offer to lead an armed force into Albania and his ability to raise an army of anything like the size (8 to 10,000) which he claims he could do.

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